

# Tom Yee

## Instructor and Founder, Home Tai Chi

### Background

Around the year 2000, two weeks after starting a new job out-of-state, I became so stressed that I needed therapy. Right away, my therapist saw what rough shape I was in and found some activities to help me get out of the house and out of my isolation. In addition to daily nature walks she suggested 3 classes: one on meditation, one on self-improvement, and another on Tai Chi.

The self-improvement class felt like a second job, and I was much too antsy for meditation ... but the Tai Chi and walks were perfect. They didn't help me with my work situation however, and after another month in New Hampshire, I decided to move back home to Massachusetts.

In the last session with my therapist, she encouraged me to continue taking walks and to find a Tai Chi class.

My home neighborhood didn't offer much nature, so eventually the walks ended. And unfortunately, the only Tai Chi studio near me didn't teach the style I learned. It would have been okay to try a new style, but I didn't like how the class was taught. The instructor mainly focused on the experienced students, and new people like me were expected to follow the intermediate ones (who weren't that good and who weren't really teaching us). This was totally different from the step-by-step instructions I had received from The Taoist Tai Chi Society of New Hampshire, so I stopped going after attending only one class.

I was too discouraged to even put into practice what I already knew, so life went on for a year or two without doing anything..

Then one day, I saw that a friend had a Tai Chi video among her video collection. I asked to borrow it, but she said, "You can have it. I couldn't follow it at all, so good luck!"

This certainly was good luck, because that video (T'ai Chi for Health: Yang Long Form) changed my life. Terry Dunn's Yang style seemed to match what I had learned in New Hampshire. Although I could clearly see why my friend gave up (not having face-to-face interaction is a huge hurdle)—I didn't care. I realized that I missed the practice so much that I was determined to make it work and must've hit pause and rewind every two seconds.

The tricky part was doing this in my small living room with a big old fashioned box tv. As I made my way through the video, I kept thinking about adapting the instructions so that Tai Chi could be done in the smallest of spaces. At that time, there wasn't an easy way for me to get this idea out into the world, so after I learned the entire long form I put the practice down.

And there it lay for nearly two decades.

But just a couple of months ago I was talking with a friend about exercise and yoga ... and she helped to breathe new life into this old dream.

And thanks to YouTube and our various devices, now I can share this dream with all of you.

I hope you get as much out of doing Tai Chi as I have!

Tom Yee

